



Office of Strategic Services Receives Congressional Gold Medal

March 21, 2018

WASHINGTON – The members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) received a Congressional Gold Medal today during a ceremony in Emancipation Hall of the U.S. Capitol. The medal, conferred collectively, recognizes the members of the OSS for their superior service and major contributions during World War II.

The OSS was America's first effort to implement a system of strategic intelligence during World War II and provided the basis for the modern-day American intelligence and special operations communities. Present day Special Operations Forces trace their lineage to the OSS. The CIA, the Navy SEALs, the Army Special Forces, and the Air Force Special Operations Command all have their precursors in the OSS. The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research also traces its creation to the OSS Research and Analysis Branch.



The OSS was composed of both military personnel and civilians. Women comprised more than one-third of the OSS personnel. Many of America's leading scientists and scholars served in the OSS. The OSS organized, trained, supplied, and fought with resistance organizations throughout Europe and Asia. They conducted covert operations and reconnaissance; pioneered new technology, including the Lambertsen Amphibious Respiratory Unit (LARU), which was the precursor to current SCUBA technology; and developed innovative counterintelligence actions that provided vital information during World War II.

The United States Mint sculpted and manufactured the Office of Strategic Services Congressional Gold Medal. Its obverse (heads) features the inscription "OSS" revealing three figures – a woman, a paratrooper, and a man in a suit – that represent the broad range of work undertaken by the OSS. Each figure is rendered as a shape without details, hinting at the way OSS agents sought to operate anonymously. The diversity in the OSS is also reflected by the figures, conveying that OSS members were men and women, civilian and military. The design also features the dates "1942-1945," the years during which the OSS operated. United States Mint Artistic Infusion Program (AIP) artist Emily Damstra created the design, which United States Mint Sculptor-Engraver Renata Gordon sculpted.

The medal's reverse (tails), also designed by Damstra, features the OSS Spearhead inscribed with code words related to important OSS missions and agents. United States Mint Sculptor-Engraver Joseph Menna sculpted the design.

The public law that awards the Congressional Gold Medal to the OSS also authorizes the United States Mint to strike and sell bronze reproductions of the medal. The three-inch medal (**18MB**), priced at \$39.95, and the 1.5-inch medal (**18MA**), priced at \$6.95, will be available for purchase on March 21, 2018, at 3 p.m. Eastern Time through the Mint's online catalog at www.catalog.usmint.gov/ and at 1-800-USA-MINT (872-6468). Hearing- and speech-impaired customers with TTY equipment may call 1-888-321-MINT (6468).

The Congressional Gold Medal is one of the nation's highest civilian awards and is bestowed by Congress as an expression of gratitude for distinguished achievements and contributions by individuals, groups, or institutions.

About the United States Mint

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- View and download images of the OSS Medal at www.usmint.gov/news/image-library/silver-bronze-medals.
- Visit www.usmint.gov/about for information about the United States Mint.

- Visit <https://www.catalog.usmint.gov/email-signup> to subscribe to United States Mint electronic product notifications, news releases, and public statement.
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